

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Their actions are un-American and I am appalled.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. Period. If they are unwilling to play by the rules, then they should not be permitted to play.

I am still upset that Sinclair executives took it upon themselves to censor a broadcast of ABC's Nightline program earlier this year. (Nightline, you may recall, did a thoughtful and dignified tribute to the Iraq war dead, back when the total was merely in the 700s.) Sinclair's latest plan to use the public airwaves to advance their own political agenda is even more egregious. Perhaps there should be a three-strikes-and-you're-out rule regarding broadcasting licensees. Then we would be one Sinclair gaffe away from returning their TV stations to the hands of Americans.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.